Health Budget Oversight Meeting (HBOG)
23rd April 2020
Conference Call 2:30pm

Health Service Executive:	Stephen Mulvany, Tim Cummins, Colum Maddox, Joe Sheeky, Jennifer O Callaghan, Sinead Stone, Tony Patterson, Nigel O Keefe, Alan Ryan, John Sheil,
Department of Health:	Paul Bolger, Gerry O'Brien, Kevin Colman, Louise Carrigan, Caoimhe Dolan, Aonraid Dunne, David Bolger, Denise McCarthy, Eoin Halpin, Evan Walker, Fiona Prendergast, Rhona Broderick, Matthew Dignam, Megan Coll, Sharon Gilligan, Aidan Gilchrist,
D/Public Expenditure & Reform:	Ronnie Downes (Chair), David Owens, Terry Jennings, Robert Scott, Deirdre Collins, Patrick Moran, Albert Morris, Seán Prior, Cian McCarthy, Kevin O'Farrell.

1. **Introductions and minutes**

Minutes of previous meeting (16.04) agreed following discussion and subject to amendments, and subject to recirculation to confirm final version. It was agreed that HBOG minutes will be available publicly one month following each meeting.

2. **Procurement**

HSE side raised a potential requirement for additional PPE, outside of the original €208m sanctioned. Overall financial risks of PPE procurement were outlined and discussed amongst the Group, as price and demand continues to increase.

The air transport costs of the original €208m PPE sanction on a cost-price basis was discussed.

Three commercial price equivalents for similar aircrafts were sourced in the context of the agreement with AerLingus.

3. **Monitoring and Reporting.**

It was agreed that officials would continue to work in parallel to the HBOG, through bilateral engagement using the contacts set out in the organigram, with a view to supporting the work of HBOG and facilitating efficient updating on the various work strands.

<u>Logged queries</u>

Action: Bi-lateral discussions to progress between meetings to clear queries

<u>Private hospitals:</u>

Utilisation of private hospitals was discussed. It was noted that there appears to be excess unused capacity in public and private hospital system at present, attributable to both delays in finalising an agreement with private consultants, and to lower-than-projected levels of activity in acute hospitals.

It was said that clinical opinion indicated a continuing need to retain this level of capacity. DPER noted that data would be needed to support a case for continuing retention of high levels of capacity beyond the minimum period, e.g. in scenarios where the levels of Covid-19 might be effectively suppressed. The Acute Hospital subgroup of NPHET will discuss non-COVID activity in private hospitals in more detail. They are fully engaged on this issue.

DoH said that levels of activity in hospitals will increase over the coming weeks as data shows that ED attendances and admissions are already increasing.

The HSE and NTPF are putting together a system to track all patients in private hospital (transfers and direct).

DPER raised the issue of the April costs leading to a larger estimate overall; DoH highlighted that final costs will not be known until the cost verification process is complete.

Action: PER requested financial analysis including the EY analysis re. Private Hospital arrangements. HSE to forward. Until the exercise by EY is completed the costs cannot be fully assessed.

Citywest:

Activity levels in Citywest were discussed.

Private Nursing Homes temporary support:

The Scheme went live last Friday with fewer applicants than anticipated. Data on the operation of the scheme and the impact of Covid-19 on this sector will be reviewed on a continuous basis as the scheme is rolled out. Private nursing homes are looking to expand the scheme to cover private residents. Min/Health meeting with NHI today to discuss expanding the scheme.

Action: PER to send queries to FIN/Health contact and discuss in further detail offline to revert to HBOG next week.

Profiling:

February on profile. No non-COVID issues to draw to PER attention at this time.

DoH are monitoring State claims – currently under profile as courts aren't sitting.

PCRS:

Significant PCRS deficit apparent in March (much of it related to COVID). . To be discussed further at next meeting of PCRS, DoH, and DPER.

4. **AOB:**

The plan for the REV and when this revision would take place was discussed. It is anticipated that this will be signed-off prior to the summer break.

Action: Sub meetings offline with will take place re: Private Hospitals, Nursing Homes and PCRS and will revert to HBOG next week with outcomes for discussion.

Testing Costs:

HSE have not yet submitted detailed information relating to rollout of C19 testing and expected costs.

Action: Costings to be sent to PER as soon as these become available.

Flu Vaccine Costs

Widening eligibly for the flu vaccine is being deliberated at a clinical level. A proposal with finalised costings will be sent to DPER shortly.

Costings on expanded influenza vaccination programme will be available today or tomorrow.

Action: Costings to be sent to PER as soon as these become available.

Value for Money

Concern was raised regarding overcapacity in respect of certain expenditure measure and the scale of potential additional expenditure pressures still to come.

Cash Profiles

Action: COVID cash profile over to DPER by COB 24th April

Next meeting to take place Thursday 30 April.